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AUTHOR Muse, Ivan D.
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ABSTRACT

Characterized by limited financial resources, course offerings, vocational education programs, faculty, and administrators, rural schools have a student population that is generally poorer, less motivated, more culturally deprived, and more isolated than its urban counterpart. Consequently, the rural school teacher has an especially demanding job, which is considerably more complicated than that of the urban teacher. Results of a nationwide survey indicated that 75.4% of the teachers surveyed felt they were inadequately prepared to teach in rural schools. Some of the newer approaches to teacher training that seem particularly useful are: earlier teacher training experiences; micro-teaching; mediated learning aides; competency based teacher education; and teacher centers. Among 200 teacher training institutions in a nationwide survey, there were only 15 which had any rural education emphasis. However, the National Rural/Regional Education Association supports an active and growing group of university personnel interested in rural education, and there are rural education programs going on in Idaho, Utah, New York, and other places striving to meet rural needs via preservice and/or inservice course work. Rurally responsive training must encompass: specialized faculty; cooperative relationships among educational agencies; team governance and close interaction between teacher trainers, community, parents, etc.; and preservice and inservice training. (JC)

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PRESERVICE PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL GOING INTO RURAL SCHOOLS

BY

IVAN D. MUSE

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PRESERVICE PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL

GOING INTO RURAL SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

> Did you hear the story about the guy who went to sleep and didn't wake up for fifty years? Well, when he awoke, besides having a very long beard, he discovered that his once rural existence had been changed to ribbons of concrete 120 feet wide where hundreds of new fangled super powered automobiles traveled rapidly toward unknown destinations. His old corn patch was gone and in its place a forty story skyscraper hugged the sky. Even his old fishing hole had been filled in and a huge modern airport permitted gigantic metal aeroplanes to leap and land with deafening roars of power.
>
> The suddenness of awakening to the drastic changes terrified the little fellow so he ran in abject panic. "I have got to get away from all of this," he exclaimed. Then he saw it nestled in a little grove of poplar trees. The familiar object was like an oasis--a refuge. "Thank heavens," he shouted, "a school!" With a headlong rush he climbed the steps, clutched to the door knob and with a sigh of relief remarked, "I'm safe, 'cause I know that nothing has changed here in the past fifty years."

This fictitional little tale, offered as humor at an educator's conference sometime ago, brought considerable chuckles from the audience. The question as to whether schools change rapidly enough to meet the demands of society has been debated frequently, with the critics of education seemingly more numerous than those satisfied with the system.

On the positive side, it is somewhat reassuring for an educator to note that the frightened fellow in the story found comfort and relief in a school building. One could conclude that perhaps this modern-day "Rip Van Winkle" had felt some happiness in his earlier school years. Secondly, one might surmise that the old fellow missed the peace and security of the rural environment and was heading in that direction as many urbanites do when the pace of city living becomes too stressful.

Regardless of the critics and shortcomings attributed to the educational system, most individuals are appreciative of their schools. Part of this feeling can be traced to positive personal experiences that have occurred to many Americans as they progressed from preschool to high school graduation and beyond. Imperfect as they may seem, schools have served as a major instrument in shaping the lives of countless millions who have used schooling as a means of improving opportunity and the quality of life. Education is the major occupation of approximately three out of every ten persons in the United States. This figure does not include those who work indirectly with schools, such as food suppliers, school furniture manufacturers, yearbook publishers, athletic equipment distributors, etc.

Over 62 million people are directly involved in the educational enterprise. Of this number, about 59 million are students enrolled in schools and colleges. Nearly 3 million teachers, 300,000 superintendents, principals, supervisors, and other instructional staff members help operate these schools (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, 1972). This total number of learners, scholars, and educators is more than the entire 1890 U.S. population. Today nearly one out of every three people is enrolled in a class ranging from nursery school to adult education.

Regardless of a student's place of residence, he/she will reside in a school district of some type. The distance a student will have to travel to attend school may vary as a result of size of community, grade level, and rurality of residence. In 1972, there were 16,514 operating public school districts in the 50 states that enrolled youth from rural,

suburban, and urban areas. These districts have as their purpose the education of children from all economic circumstances, racial and ethnic backgrounds.

The current educational investment of well over $100 billion annually for the support of education has resulted in over 75% of all youngsters of high school age receiving high school diplomas. Education includes programs for career education, for the handicapped, the bilingual, the gifted, and offerings for the very young and elderly. Prodinsky (1976: p. 77) reports that for the first time in the history of any nation, children of the poor get special teaching, special help, and special service. In addition, classrooms are designed to be more livable with better lighting, more comfortable furniture, and often carpeting. Classrooms are also equipped with an array of instructional materials that help teach not only the basics and the traditional, but new math, metrics, updated biology and general science, and many other expanded and new curricular approaches.

The task of developing the potential of every child and adult to the fullest so that they might be prepared to live a satisfying life is not an easy undertaking. The school districts in this country service areas varying in population from a few hundred to hundreds of thousands. Land area is also a factor in school district operation. In Hawaii, the entire state (five major islands) is considered one school district, while the State of California has numerous school districts. Many districts are also seriously affected by financial considerations. Without adequate funds, quality facilities are lacking and the recruitment and retention of good teachers is extremely difficult.

Good teachers are a necessity for any school system. The teacher's clients are his students and the school as a whole is built around the student/teacher relationship. This relationship ultimately determines the quality of the student's education. The well-trained and professionally responsible teacher is a catalyst who inspires students to think, react, and pursue further learning. The teacher serves as a model and gives guidance and support to the student. The process of gaining an education can, through the actions of the teacher, be stimulating, dynamic, relevant, and consistent, or it can be uninspiring, monotonous, and a tedious chore.

It is the responsibility of the many teacher-training institutions to train capable teachers for the thousands of schools, both urban and rural, that are in operation in the United States. Unfortunately, teacher-training institutions today tend to think that teacher preparation is a general preparation and that the teacher who exits from such a program can be successful as a generalist, regardless of where he/she teaches. The difficulty in accepting this position is the plight of rural schools in hiring and retaining the well-qualified teacher. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (Ford, Hite, and Koch, 1967: p. 30) reports that two of the major problems associated with rural schools are difficulty in hiring and retaining good teachers and the poor quality of instruction that exists.

It has been known for some time that the teacher turnover rate in nonmetropolitan schools is substantially higher than that of metropolitan schools. One of the major problems new teachers face in teaching in a rural area is the tremendous adjustment that must be made to living

in a small community with its geographical isolation and nonmetropolitan social characteristics. Rural living for students, especially those who come from families with low economic resources, is much different from that of the young people who live in metropolitan areas. These differences are so significant that they can seriously impair an individual's ability to cope with school, work, and other aspects of daily living (Levine, 1963; Jenkins, 1963).

Until recently, teacher-training institutions have primarily offered campus and urban-based teacher-training programs with little thought of the need for specialized training for educators who might wish to work in rural communities. However, the efforts of the National Rural/Regional Education As ociation, rural school districts, and some universities, coupled with a decreasing demand for teachers, are forcing some change upon colleges of teacher education. It is becoming evident that more colleges and school districts are beginning to seek methods of rectifying the inequalities that exist between rural and urban educational programs.

It is the purpose of this paper to:

1. Provide an overview of the problems teachers face in working in rural schools that point to a need for specialized preservice professional training and ongoing inservice education.

2. Review the history of teacher-training efforts during the past fifty years to determine earlier patterns of professional training and current trends.

3. Identify some of the promising preservice and inservice programs that are specifically designed to improve the quality of teaching in rural schools.

4. Recommend some steps that must be taken by teacher-training institutions if teachers are to be prepared to meet the needs of all youth.

The Need for Specialized Training for Educators of Rural Schools

Population characteristics in terms of preferences for living have provided a means for educators, sociologists, and others to study schools. Areas in which people live may be classified primarily as urban or rural. The rural population is defined by the Bureau of the Census to include persons living in the open country or in towns of less than 2,500 people. The Census includes within the rural population the rural farm population, which comprises all rural residents living on farms, and the rural nonfarm population, which includes the remaining rural population.

The 1970 Census defines the urban population as (1) all persons living in places of 2,500 inhabitants or more, incorporated as cities, boroughs, villages, and towns, except towns in New England, New York, and Wisconsin; (2) the densely settled urban fringe, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas, around cities of 50,000 or more; and (3) unincorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more outside any urban fringe.

Moe and Tamblyn (1974: p. 49) suggest that the population be divided into two primary groups for easier discussion of school characteristics. These groupings would be labeled metropolitan and nonmetropolitan. Nonmetropolitan would be defined as people and places outside of counties containing a city of 50,000 or more inhabitants. With this definition for rural nonmetropolitan areas, approximately 31.4% (63.8 million) of the total population of the United States for 1970 would be classified within this category.

Is it necessary to study the strengths and weaknesses of schools by separating them into two categories rather than considering the schools as a whole? A few educators deny that rural education as a separate consideration exists. According to them, the principles of good teaching and good school administration are general and have universal applicability; thus, any endeavor to identify rural education is futile and unworthy of any scholarly endeavor (Moe and Tamblyn, 1974: p. 32).

Others stress that problems confronting rural America, such as poverty, housing, medical services, and education, are among the most serious in the United States today (Johnson, 1976). Concerns about education in rural areas are particularly pressing. Moe and Tamblyn (1974) state:

> The fact is that rural youth are not receiving the education required for their full participation in the society of today and tomorrow, despite the current national commitment to provide quality education for all. (p. 28)

Coop (1970) refers to the tradition of neglect confronting rural areas in an increasingly urban society when he reports:

> Rural, furthermore, means an important segment of our nation's population--one third. It is a segment that is not decreasing in proportionate size, despite the alleged urbanization of our society. It is a segment that tends to be overlooked in these times of preoccupation with urban crises.
>
> Although solving urban problems in our country should have top priority, the severity and magnitude of similar problems in the development of human resources and in the provision of basic services and facilities are no less important in rural areas. (p. 3)

Edington (1976: p. 2) indicates in a publication regarding the strengthening of small rural schools that there is much room for improvement of rural school programs. He reports that a measurable difference

between the education afforded rural students and that afforded urban students exists, and because most rural students attend small schools, this imbalance extends to the small rural schools. Rogers and Svenning (1969) have identified some of the characteristics of small rural schools that are generally dissimilar from urban schools. Although non-metropolitan schools may vary in size, isolation, and ethnic/racial group attendance, most small rural schools are characterized by (1) limited financial resources, (2) limited course offerings, (3) limited vocational education programs, and (4) limited faculty and administration. These conditions, especially the limited financial resources, combined with physical isolation, tend to have a profound effect upon the quality of educational programs that can be offered to rural youth.

The Rural School Setting

The rural community provides an opportunity for a friendly, close-based educational organization and considerable community involvement. Fishing, hunting, and quiet hours of relaxation and solitude are often appealing to the person who wishes to live a more leisurely life in a farm and ranch "rolling hills" environment. Behind the "rolling hills," the fields of golden corn and the green meadows, the mountain breezes and the cold-flowing brooks, however, exist countless rural communities plagued with serious social problems. At the founding of this nation, Americans were primarily an agricultural and agrarian people. Census records of the first fifty years of the country under a constitution showed approximately 19 of every 20 families living in a rural setting.

As the force of industrialism began to be felt in the country during the nineteenth century, rapid changes in rural society took effect. Mechanized factories in the emerging cities required workers, and the manpower needed was on the farm. Poorer families and tenants quickly realized the value of leaving the country and moving to the city, as better paying jobs were available and the services (schools, medical facilities, social activities, etc.) were far superior to those they had experienced. As cities in the East, South, North, and West grew, the rural areas decreased in population and in ability to keep up with the urban centers in providing adequate support services.

Within the past fifty years, the United States has emerged as one of the major urban societies in the world. To most people it is everywhere apparent that the principal characteristic of change in the U.S. population since World War II has been urbanization (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Development Division, 1971: p. 1). It is equally apparent to the rural dweller that urbanization and its social problems have received a disproportionate part of attention and assistance as compared to the nonmetropolitan sections.

Poverty has been of paramount concern in many rural regions. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Development Division (1971) reports:

> Although the total number of persons in farm families below the poverty level is smaller than non-farm families, the percentage of persons in farm families remains about twice as high as non-farm. (p. 46)

A higher percentage of Americans living in nonmetropolitan areas are poorer than those living in metropolitan areas. In rural counties,

17.5% of the people are poor, compared with 10.6% in urban areas. For those rural residents actually related to agriculture and classified in the 1970 Census as farm residents, the percentage of poor rises to 20.2% (Cronemeyer, 1971).

What was once considered to be "the best way of life in America" has become, as referred to by many, the most disadvantaged or, more simply, "the people left behind." Although not true in all cases, rural areas typically have higher percentages of poverty, poorer housing standards, fewer cultural attractions, less opportunity for adequate medical care, less opportunity to attract federal and state funding for programs, and the lowest levels of education.

The people of rural America, in essence, have become a forgotten minority. The focus upon problems of urban centers since World War II has obscured the plight of numbers of the nation's people who live in rural areas.

One of the most glaring deficiencies in the rural community is that of rural education. A child born in rural America has one chance in four of belonging to a family whose income is below poverty guidelines. Compared to the typical child in an urban school, the rural child will have fewer opportunities to study in a particular area of interest and fewer chances to become prepared for post-high school experiences. The teacher in a rural school is likely to have less training and there are generally fewer specialists to help the student learn than in the urban setting (Mayeske, 1972: p. 30).

In addition, the young person has less than one chance in four of finding gainful employment in the local community when he/she reaches

adulthood. The forced migration to cities in order to find work further depletes the resources of the rural community and requires the young adult to attempt to adjust to a new urban environment. The adjustment to metropolitan living often creates unhappiness and added problems for urban society.

Rural schools have the challenging task of attempting to educate a broad variety of individuals, ranging from the most common, white Anglo Saxons, to native Americans in the West, Spanish American migrant workers in the Southwest, poor whites in the Appalachians, and the rural Blacks in the South. Farm families may reside on small acreage and barely make a living or realize substantial financial rewards from land holdings providing farm crops, milk, or meat to dinner tables across the country. Nonfarm residents are increasing in rural areas. These individuals usually are involved in manufacturing of some sort, utilizing the natural resources of the area. There are also indications that many metropolitan dwellers are seeking nearby rural areas in which to live as a means of escaping the negative aspects of city life.

In 1972 there were 16,514 operating public school districts in the United States. Of this number, 7,103 districts had fewer than 600 students in their attendance boundaries. An additional 2,635 districts had only 600 to 1,199 students in attendance in their area. Another 1,650 school districts had between 1,200 and 1,799 students. These small districts represent nearly 70% of all school districts and they are most often found in nonmetropolitan areas.

Thus, these thousands of small school districts face the growing demands placed upon all schools to provide personalized instruction for

each child, special diagnosis-prescriptive teaching for children with learning and behavioral problems, and multicultural education. Rural schools are expected to equal the results of urban schools with far less financial support and often in an isolated environment that has few of the resources found in urban areas.

The Rural School Child

The rural population is predominantly white although the 1970 Census lists nearly 5 million nonwhites. The largest number are Black, followed by Spanish Americans and American Indians. The population of rural America also includes all nationalities and religions, as well as ethnic groups. A much higher percentage of people living in rural areas is made up of the whites of Appalachia, the Blacks of the Deep South, the Spanish Americans of the Southwest, and the Indians of the West.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (1970: p. 73), almost one-half of the nation's poor resided in the South; however, rural poor exist in every state. Another characteristic of the rural population is that of low-skilled workers. This is often the result of a lower educational level than that of urban persons. School dropouts and unemployment are more prevalent in rural areas. Writing on the school dropout, Schrieber (1965) states:

> Rural youth receive an average of one year less education than do their urban counterparts. Rural America has more functional illiterates, fewer educational resources, fewer vocational and technical schools, poorer school buildings and lower paid teachers. In rural America 1.3 million school-age children are not enrolled in school, and schools are ill-equipped to provide counseling and social services. (p. 131)

Rural children born into families with low economic resources are often required to begin early to help the family subsist. Rural living for these children is very different from the urban living of other children. These differences are often so significant that they can seriously impair the student's ability to cope with school, work, and other aspects of daily living (Nam and Powers, 1965).

Although an increasing comparison for the problems of poverty is evident about the country, a lack of understanding of the causes and a failure to consolidate efforts in reducing the problem prevails. Often instant remedies in the form of a "program that will alleviate the problem" are devised and applied to all populations and parts of the country. When such methods are applied to rural areas, they tend to be less effective because such rural problems offer no simple solution. Ruel (1974) states that:

> Because rural areas have uniquely different characteristics, programs designed for urban populations are not usually applicable in rural areas. The poverty problem of rural America was a long time in the making. Furthermore, they are covered with a thick veneer of apathy and indifference, both on the part of the poverty-stricken and those who represent the more affluent of our society. Solving these problems may take a long time unless as much concentrated effort is directed toward them as being directed toward the problems of the urban ghettos. (pp. 28-29)

To the teacher new to a rural school position, working with children from poor homes can be particularly difficult. These students often exhibit withdrawal or aggressive behaviors which are maladaptive or deemed undesirable in a middle-class school culture. The number of dropouts and delinquents from rural schools are indicative of students who have found it difficult to deal with youth status and poverty (Miller, 1963; Polk, 1963).

Sewell and Haller (1965) attempted to identify a number of factors relevant to the educational and occupational aspirations of rural youth. They collected data on more than 10,000 Wisconsin high school seniors and reported:

> From all of the evidence it seems quite apparent that rural students, particularly the farm students, are less academically oriented, somewhat less able, and considerably less convinced of the value of higher education than urban students.
>
> The rural students attend small high schools and schools that send smaller proportions of their graduating classes to college than do urban students. They are less likely than urban students to have as their best friends other boys and girls who plan to go to college. They are somewhat less likely than urban students to have discussed their post-high school plans with their teachers and counselors, but are equally likely to have been encouraged by them to attend college. They are less likely than urban students to live within commuting distance of a college and are less likely to have lived in an urbanized country where a wide variety of educational and occupational opportunities are visible to them. Thus, rural youth, in comparison with urban youth, find themselves in a school and community environment with considerably less potential for arousing and maintaining high level educational and occupational aspirations. (p. 167)

In summary, rural youth live in geographically isolated, less densely populated areas. Their chances of coming from a poor family are much greater than youth who live in urban areas. The rural youth is also often less motivated to succeed educationally than his/her urban counterpart.

Obviously, all rural nonmetropolitan youth cannot be generalized into the characteristics above. However, the conditions of many rural youth are such that they need to be understood as unique individuals. It is the special task of teachers and others to be aware of the characteristics of rural youth and schools and communities in order to assist students to reach their fullest potential.

The Rural School Teacher

Individuals who choose to enter the teaching field do so for a variety of reasons, and those reasons influence subsequent career patterns and vocational interests. For a few, the initial decision beyond high school training is to enter college, and entrance into professional education is a late decision. To others, limitations in job opportunities in a chosen major field of study (psychology, sociology, economics, as a few examples) require entering teaching as a second choice. Some women frequently choose teacher certification as a goal although they do not expect to teach immediately, as marriage and family responsibilities are expected to come first. Others enter teacher training with a strong sense of dedication and purpose and seek to become as well prepared as possible. Regardless of the reason for seeking a teaching credential, all trainees must go through basically the same process: entering college (most often in urban settings), obtaining the requisite preparation (coursework and teacher training in a nearby public school), graduation, and job hunting.

The first teaching experience generally requires considerable readjustment in personal social life (Shaplin, 1961: pp. 33-59). As reported by Havighurst and Neugarten (1975: p. 419), many beginning teachers experience what has been called "reality shock." In other words, new teachers find themselves in marked variance with preconceptions of the teaching role and setting.

This phenomenon of reality shock does not occur in all cases because preteaching experiences, such as being reared in a family of educators, working with youth groups, teacher aide employment, etc.,

have given considerable advance notice of the teaching career. The individual who begins teaching in the same type of community in which he/she was reared often makes the transition into teaching more smoothly and uneventfully than those who do not (Muse and Parsons, 1976: p. 34).

The student-teaching experience provides the prospective teacher with a relatively safe period of classroom training experience. A successful practice-teaching experience will usually encourage the trainee to seek employment in a similar situation. Thus, the teacher-training institution located in an urban area and training teachers in nearby urban schools is, in essence, encouraging graduates to seek employment in urban settings. Strengthening this pattern of training and employment preference is the fact that a large number of individuals going into teaching grew up in a metropolitan area.

Lower teacher salaries, inadequate physical facilities, and other inconveniences of living in small communities are seen as disadvantages to the new teacher who has lived in an urban area and has taught in a large, well-equipped metropolitan school. The reluctance of teachers to take a rural position makes it extremely difficult for rural schools to maintain a well-trained professional staff, especially in the more remote areas of the country. Not only do new teachers generally prefer employment in metropolitan schools as a first choice, but when they do take jobs in rural schools, they generally intend to stay only a short time and then move to a large community (Edington, 1976; Oregon State Board of Education, 1970; Texas Educational Agency, 1971).

One of the difficulties in retaining teachers in rural areas is their isolation from many of the urban resources that provide inservice

training and opportunity for continued professional growth. To the rural teachers, professional growth often means the added expense of moving each summer to a college campus for coursework. The urban teacher, on the other hand, may only need to "cross the street" to receive such training.

Teachers who have trained or taught in metropolitan schools are often dismayed when they discover that the job of rural teachers on either the elementary or secondary school level is, by and large, considerably more complicated than that of urban teachers (Noble and Dawson, 1961: pp. 34-35). The complication is directly related to the staffing patterns of small schools. In large schools, there are sufficient students that teachers can instruct in one or two academic areas, while in the small rural school it is not uncommon to find teachers with four or more preparations daily. Truesdell (1969) reports that "teachers in smaller schools are more likely to be teaching in other than their major of preparation, and also are likely to be teaching subjects requiring several daily preparations [p. 5]."

The findings of Kirkpatrick (1968: pp. 22-23) support the contention that rural teachers have heavy workloads. He reports that most rural teachers are required to teach five or more differing content classes each day. The Texas Education Agency (1971: p. 6) notes that this condition, along with lower salaries, geographical isolation, and poorer living conditions, causes higher teacher turnover in rural schools.

Although staffing problems of the nonmetropolitan schools have been somewhat ameliorated due to the oversupply of teachers in the first

half of the 1970s, a number of small rural schools must still take what they can get. When any teacher is placed in a school situation where assignments are given to teach in areas for which he/she has not been fully trained, the quality of instruction diminishes. Not only must teacher-training institutions specifically recruit and train teachers for rural areas, but efforts must also be made by all concerned educational groups to provide adequate inservice training to those teachers, good and poor, presently in teaching assignments.

There is a definite need for universities to make a greater effort to recruit and train teachers who are attracted to rural communities and who are able to bring a diverse background of experience to the rural school community. A study by Borg (1964) recommends that teachers who plan to teach in nonmetropolitan areas should have a rural student-teaching experience. He adds that rural teacher trainees should be able to adapt to individual student differences and be able to teach more than one subject, grade, and age. Muse (1974) has found that, regardless of the area in which he/she has been raised (metropolitan or nonmetropolitan), an individual who elects to complete a student-teaching experience in a rural school will most often prefer a first-teaching experience in that area.

A nationwide questionnaire was circulated by Charles (1969: p. 103) in which rural school teachers were asked to indicate needed improvements in the training of rural teachers. The most frequently mentioned areas suggested as needing improvement were (1) more practical methods courses; (2) learning to teach with minimum facilities; (3) more preparation in guidance and counseling of students; (4) better

preparation in a broader number of subject-matter fields; (5) added courses in rural culture and sociology; (6) ability to teach several grades in the same room; (7) training in diagnosis and treatment of exceptional children; (8) preparation in "practical rural living" (i.e., basic principles of carpentry, electricity, and plumbing); and (9) instruction in rural economic systems.

Of all the teachers polled in this study, a very significant 75.4% felt that they were inadequately prepared to teach in rural schools. Muse and Parsons (1976: pp. 32-35), in a study of rural teachers and the rural schools, found that single teachers and/or teachers raised in urban settings reported difficulty in making a social adjustment to the rural community. In addition, there was found to be a marked tendency for rural teachers and administrators to use their positions as a "springboard" to other positions.

The teacher who has lived in a rural community while growing up often has less difficulty in adjusting to a rural teaching position. However, regardless of earlier home residence, new teachers tend to perform more successfully if their student-teaching experience was similar to their first position. Vittetoe (1977: pp. 429-430), in a study of 747 first-year teachers, found that student teachers who take a first position in a situation dissimilar to that of their student teaching tend to be rated as less successful by school supervisors.

The rural administrators and teachers in the study felt that new rural teachers were not adequately trained for their responsibilities in the classroom or community. Likewise, the majority of teachers felt that ongoing inservice training was very important. Inservice training was

also listed as one of the greatest needs of rural schools in a survey of members of the Rural Education Association. The Association (Heesacker, 1976: p. 2) distributed a nationwide questionnaire among its membership in 1975. Listed as the second greatest need of rural schools was initiating programs to better educate teachers, administrators, and others for work in rural schools.

It is apparent from the evidence cited that teachers in rural schools require considerable assistance in meeting the requirements of rural school employment. New teachers in particular need to be prepared to understand the rural environment. They must have developed the ability to live happily away from the center of cultural activities which the metropolitan areas provide and to enjoy the satisfaction of associations with the people with whom they work and play. The rural teacher cannot gain the necessary experience and skills unless teacher-training institutions serve as active agents in promoting rural teacher education.

TEACHER-TRAINING PROGRAMS

The problem of recruiting and adequately training educational personnel for rural schools is not unique to this decade. Cubberly (1922) stressed in one of his books on rural education the following:

> New attention to the rural-teacher problem. During the past ten years, new attention has been directed to the special problems of preparing teachers for service in the rural schools. As the complex problems of rural life and rural needs have dawned upon us, we have slowly begun to realize that their solution not only demands a new type of rural education, but that education is also the key to the solution. (p. 289)

Indeed, during the period from the beginning of the nineteenth century until World War II, considerable emphasis was placed upon rural education as a unique aspect of the total training of the teacher. The State of Michigan, in 1897, was the first to order that each state normal school organize a special course for the preparation of rural teachers. In 1902, the Indiana State Normal School organization made a similar provision by organizing a rural school in connection with its normal school work.

The Iowa State Teachers College adopted at an early date a plan for providing observation and practice teaching in the first year of college for those who wished to teach in rural schools. The student was excused from work at the college for one month, during which he/she would go and live in the country and do practice teaching in a rural school. Other colleges that offered rural teacher-training programs of this nature were Oregon State Normal School, Monmouth, Oregon; Kearney State Normal School in Nebraska; and the Milwaukee State Normal School in Wisconsin. In each of these schools, opportunity was offered for

student observation, practice teaching, and participation in rural community activities.

College programs which emphasized rural teacher training varied in intensity from a number of specific courses, which stressed the educational, economic, and social characteristics of small communities, to separate departments of rural education. In many instances, in addition to coursework, the students were required to spend part of their training, observing, and teaching in a rural community.

The emphasis for training educational personnel in the early part of the century came from numerous sources. The Educational Policies Commission (1939) stressed that many teachers were not adequately prepared for their jobs. The Commission reported: "This is true of the teachers in the open country to a much greater extent than those in villages and urban communities [1939, p. 14]." The Commission also stressed the obligation of colleges in preparing teachers for rural schools:

> The improvement of rural education requires the training and compensation of career teachers in the rural service rather than teachers who use the rural position as a stepping stone to the urban schools. (1939, p. 15)

During the decades of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, the need for well-trained rural teachers was considered critical (Evenden, 1935; Pittman, 1922; White House Conference on Rural Education, 1944). Evenden (1935) stressed that training for rural teachers should be equal in amount and quality to training given to urban teachers; however, the training should not be identical because the rural teacher needs special preparation for his/her work. Wolford (1946: p. 6), the

Director of Rural Education at State Teachers College in Buffalo, published a text on rural school teaching in which she identified the needed educational experiences of teachers who would work in rural communities. Another well-known educator of this era, Ruth Strang (1943), wrote in a text on child development and guidance in rural schools the following:

> . . . Although both urban and rural schools show a wide range of differences in economic and cultural opportunities, vast numbers of rural elementary teachers must grapple with isolation, meager school resources, community poverty, and other difficulties which the average city teacher could hardly visualize.

The effect of World War II upon the training of teachers for rural schools was momentous. The war effort required the individual attention and effort of millions of citizens dedicated to maintaining basic human rights and liberties. College enrollments about the country dropped dramatically as young men enlisted or were drafted to serve in the armed forces. War-related industries likewise required the skills of many young men and women to provide materials for the war effort.

In the face of decreasing enrollments, colleges were forced to reduce the number of academic offerings and consolidate many related programs. Rural teacher-training specialization was one of the first programs that were consolidated within the general education structure. Schools were also faced with a serious problem of staffing. Many of the teachers were called into the war effort, and the clamor for the "bodies" to fill the vacancies was heard from the richest school districts to the poorest and from the smallest schools to the largest.

It was not feasible for a teacher-training institution to maintain two departments when only enough students were enrolled to keep one operating. The colleges and schools got by without rural education departments during the war; when peace had been reached, returning to the same organizational arrangement was not deemed necessary.

From the post-World War II era through the 1960s, the pattern of teacher education was basically uniform and stable. One of the biggest factors encouraging uniformity was the constant demand for teachers placed upon the training institutions by the public schools. The "baby boom" beginning in the early 1950s did not abate during the 1960s, and schools desperately needed teachers to prevent overcrowded classrooms.

The general format that emerged during this period consisted of four major areas: a prescribed number of general education courses required of all students; a sequence of depth courses, which for secondary teachers was considered a major field of study, such as English or mathematics, and for elementary teachers would emphasize the range of subjects taught in elementary schools; a number of professional education courses stressing such subjects as methods of teaching, educational psychology, history, sociology, or philosophy of education; and at least one field-based experience in the schools considered as student teaching (Gutek, 1970: p. 139).

The 1970s have witnessed some substantial changes occurring in the evolution of teacher education. Not as many babies are being born, and schools are dropping in enrollment. Educators have had breathing time to begin to develop new programs designed to discourage the less

capable teacher applicant and to increase the competency of teachers progressing through the training experience.

Some of the newer approaches to the training of teachers that seem to be proving helpful in restructuring teacher education utilize the following strategies:

1. Earlier teaching experiences. Prospective teachers are encouraged early in their college training to gain clinical experiences in the schools. These experiences may be to serve as tutors, teacher aides, or assistants to teachers.

2. Micro-teaching. Students are brought together in mini-classroom situations where they can practice a teaching skill or strategy, receive immediate feedback and be relatively safe from making a "big" mistake that may cause loss of classroom control or confidence.

3. Mediated learning aids. Media materials are available in rich abundance to assist the teacher with instructional chores. The video-tape machine is very useful in taping a student teacher's performance in a micro-teaching or classroom situation, and then using the tape for visual feedback in performance.

4. Competency-based teacher education. This type of program specifies the competencies to be demonstrated by the teacher trainee, makes explicit the criteria to be applied in assessing the teacher's competencies, and holds the teacher trainee responsible for meeting those criteria. Thus, the important consideration in the CBTE program is whether the teacher trainee can demonstrate competency on specific criteria rather than whether he/she has completed a particular course.

5. Teacher centers. Sometimes known as portal schools or training sites and most often located in schools near a university, these centers help to bridge the gap between university and school. Successful programs include such elements as a needs assessment process, field-based training, center coordinator, and a shared governance system. The shared governance system, however, tends to remain primarily university-directed and organized.

PROMISING PROGRAMS FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL

It is extremely difficult to determine the number of colleges that offer preservice or inservice experiences in rural education for teacher trainees and practitioners. A survey of courses offered by colleges would reveal only a handful of schools offering classes specifically designed for rural educators. A number of colleges are located in rural areas, however; and while they generally list no rural education courses, they tend to think of themselves as preparing students to teach in rural schools. This would be particularly true of smaller colleges, such as Berea College in Kentucky, George Peabody College for Teachers in Tennessee, the University of North Dakota, the University of Wyoming, Utah State University, etc. At these institutions, many of their education graduates are from rural areas and return to small communities after graduation to teach.

Providing information about effective inservice programs presents a problem due to the localization and short-term nature of such programs. Many of these programs occur, are not reported, and as a result go relatively unnoticed beyond the college and school district(s) involved.

It is gratifying to observe that more colleges are becoming aware of the problems facing rural schools and are voicing an interest in improving the training of rural educators. The National Rural/Regional Education Association supports an active and growing group of university personnel who believe that schools of education must respond actively in meeting the needs of rural youth. The Association, which

includes regional service centers, state departments of education, colleges or universities, and school districts, encourages research and programs that will assist in the training of educational personnel for rural schools.

Of all the colleges engaged in teacher training, the number specifically offering some rural education training constitutes a very small percentage of the total group. In an attempt to ascertain the number of colleges with rural education components and the extent to which existing programs provide rural training opportunities, a survey sheet was sent to a sample number of colleges of teacher training.

The number of colleges contacted totaled more than 200. Colleges selected were of varying sizes and were located in different geographical regions. Of these schools, only 15 indicated that they were involved in rural teacher training, as evidenced by specific college course titles or practical experience in a rural school setting. As mentioned at the beginning of this section, a number of colleges located in predominantly rural areas felt that their professional education programs were appropriate for the prospective rural teacher even though not specifically listed or described as such.

If such schools are providing rural classroom experiences for their student teacher trainees, it may well be that they are preparing their graduates in an adequate manner to become successful, productive, and happy teachers. Some of the general comments from college personnel responding to the survey are interesting and indicate a diversity of opinion about the need for rural teacher training:

1. Our institution is situated in a rural area of northeastern Oklahoma and thus does carry elements of rural application; I personally feel this should be emphasized in programs.

2. I believe that it is important that students consider the possibility of working in rural areas and that teacher education programs make experiences available to students. Perhaps it should not be mandatory but an alternative as an option.

3. I personally feel that an effective teacher training program can bridge the gap between urban and rural America.

4. Very favorable. We are working on developing our ed program and will be investigating the training of teachers (elementary and secondary) for rural education.

5. We are located in a predominately rural area in northeast Louisiana. Therefore many of our students have rural backgrounds, and return to such areas to begin their educational careers. I believe our preparatory programs are appropriate for these students even though I cannot say they are geared specifically toward working in rural areas.

6. We train people for schools. They have a variety of experiences, some rural, some urban.

7. I see no need for our institution to have such a program.

8. I would not support any such movement on my own campus. Given our priorities in education these days it ranks at the bottom of my list.

9. There is a definite need for this type of training.

10. It is a neglected area and needs attention, but I feel that programs should be limited to a few institutions. I devised an internship program in this area some years ago, but it was never carried out to completion.

11. We are urban-oriented and have an inner city thrust.

12. We train students in general skills and competencies which we hope they can use in any situation.

13. Most young people willing to work in rural schools must be recruited from those areas. Most of our recruiting is in the cities. These young people are not much interested in rural jobs.

14. No apparent need in our geographical area.

15. I doubt that we could justify a special program. I also question the need for all the specializations that emerged in recent years.

16. Our bilingual, special education and other areas indirectly address this matter--particularly associated with northern New Mexico.

17. We compare teacher needs in rural as well as urban areas.

The brevity of the section that follows unfortunately points to the fact that our teacher-training institutions as a whole have not recognized that rural education is an important component of teacher education. The programs that do exist, however, may serve as worthwhile strategies or models for assisting interested colleges to develop new approaches to teacher education.

College Programs

Those colleges offering extensive preservice teacher preparation programs with a rural education emphasis are primarily utilizing a field-centered approach. This approach, involving a partnership between the college and public schools, may take many forms: observations, internships, teacher exchange programs, staff development retreats, and student teaching. The focus of these efforts is to place the preservice teacher in the rural community for as much training and experience as possible. The programs mentioned are not necessarily exemplary, but they are directed toward the important objective of training teachers for rural teaching service. The degree of field experience may vary from school to school, but a central thread common among the programs is that of preparation in actual rural settings.

One field-centered teacher-training project was developed in Idaho by 53 school superintendents (Teachers for the Rural World, 1970). These superintendents found that their respective school districts contained a number of longtime residents who would be outstanding prospects for teachers in their schools but lacked the teacher certification requirements for teaching in the state. A consortium of 53 school districts and Idaho State University was formed to seek ways of preparing longtime residents for service as teachers. It was decided to develop individual course syllabi for 12 separate professional courses. The courses were offered by the College of Education at the local communities with off-campus supervision from the College. The instruction evolved around actual public school experiences. Courses needed to complete subject-matter requirements were provided by extension services and correspondence courses.

The student teachers took part in classroom teaching, prepared media materials for classroom use, and performed other tasks common to the teacher in a small school. It was reported that the difficult adaptability problem of the new rural teacher was obviated by this approach to teacher preparation and the turnover of teachers was also reduced.

The teacher education program at the University of New Mexico has offered student teachers an opportunity to teach in two grade levels and within two socioeconomic communities. By using this two-segment field experience approach, teacher trainees learn to adapt their teaching to both rural and urban areas and affluent and poverty conditions. Ample opportunity is also available for the student teachers to work

with ethnic leaders in the communities as a means of better understanding the conditions and needs of the youth who come from varying ethnic backgrounds.

For the past five years, Brigham Young University (Muse, 1974) has operated a program to recruit and train teachers for rural school settings. An educational consortium composed of educators representative of county school districts, the university, a regional service center, and the Utah State Educational Agency was formed to initiate and operate a teacher-training program for rural schools. A field-based, competencies-centered approach to training was adopted with training manuals developed to aid the trainees participating in the program. Approximately 30 to 40 elementary and secondary teachers participate in this program each year. These centers, situated over 100 miles from the campus, require students to live in the area assigned and to complete a 15-week teaching assignment. Over 200 teachers have completed the rural training program, and results from an independent evaluation team indicate that the majority of students feel successful and want to teach in a rural setting.

The Division of Teacher Education at Indiana University offers a Rural Education Center Project (1973-74) that is designed to serve preservice teachers who plan to teach in rural, small town, or consolidated rural schools. This program facilitates a more closely supervised and more systematic teaching experience for student teachers. Up to 18 hours of academic credit may be earned by elementary or secondary majors through student teaching and a community internship. The internship, which normally precedes the student-teaching experience, is a required

four-week, full-day internship in a community social agency serving the needs of the area citizenry.

An important feature of this rural training effort is the on-site coordinator. This individual serves as a resource person to the student teacher and is the liaison representative of the university and the assigned schools. In addition, the on-site coordinator assists in the evaluation of the student teachers and the project operation (Rural Education Center, 1974).

Western Michigan University has a rich tradition in the area of rural education. Beginning in 1927, the rural program in education has continued to the present time. The curriculum at the institution focuses upon the preparation of educators to meet the needs of individuals living in communities with populations under 2,500. Currently the University is reexamining the rural education curriculum to determine if they are meeting the needs of rural teachers who are in small communities experiencing significant growth through migration from major urban centers (Ruel, 1974).

The State University College at Geneseo, New York, is preparing to implement a Masters degree program in Rural Education. This program will utilize the services of the Geneseo Migrant Center, particularly in providing field experiences for the students. The degree program will require completion of 33 credit hours of required and elective courses and field-centered experiences. A specialization will be required in Rural Education with emphasis on the preparation of candidates to function effectively within larger rural communities, the rural schools, and the subculture that identifies rural and migrant pupils.

Emphasis will be placed upon extensive field experiences, which include teaching in the rural public school, working within the communities in which the schools are located, and becoming familiar with the rural setting surrounding these communities.

The coursework will be taught in conjunction with the field experiences extending from the college into the rural setting. Coursework will focus upon the teacher/school/community, planning and implementing instruction, teacher-pupil interaction, management of time and materials, and evaluation of pupil learning.

In a Portland, Oregon, field-centered teacher-training program (Marsh, 1971: pp. 148-149), the teacher trainees are required to conduct extensive case studies on individually selected pupils throughout their preparation experience. They are also required to do extensive independent reading in the area of adolescent development. The rationale for this particular program emphasizes the need for rural teachers to possess a much broader background in counseling and guidance than that of urban teachers, especially in career guidance. Rural teachers must be able to knowingly acquaint their students with opportunities existing outside their immediate environment and also be able to guide their students into the fields of study necessary for certain occupations.

South Dakota State University provides an opportunity for elementary preservice teachers to gain a rural experience by attending one of two rural elementary school training sites. The rural schools are located relatively close to the University, permitting students to travel to the assigned teaching location and return in the afternoon if it is necessary to attend seminars or evening classes. Western Montana College

permits students to teach in rural schools if they request a rural assignment. In those instances, the student teacher enrolls for two to four credits of school observation and fifteen credits of student teaching. Students are normally assigned to one, two, or three teacher buildings.

Other schools in the survey indicating involvement with rural education were Keuka College; Cornell University; University of Texas, El Paso; Panhandle State University, Oklahoma; Northeastern Oklahoma State University; Eastern New Mexico University; and Oklahoma State University.

The colleges mentioned in this section may not include all of those who offer programs in rural education, but they do represent a few of the institutions that have made some concentrated effort to provide for the needs of rural communities and their youth.

Inservice Education Programs for Teachers

Inservice education has as a primary purpose the improvement of teacher performance through new skill development and/or acquisition of knowledge that will help teachers to do a better job with students, school, and community. The inservice programs mentioned in this section are designed to accomplish the above purpose, particularly in the area of rural education.

The University of Wyoming offers a course entitled "Workshop in Rural Education." This course is open to practicing teachers, administrators, and counselors. Eastern Kentucky University offers a well-attended graduate course for teachers, administrators, and counselors in elementary education. The course, entitled "Teaching the Rural

Disadvantaged Child," provides the student with information regarding the characteristics of the rural disadvantaged. The content of the course stresses an involvement in common experiences of the rural culture with an historical and contemporary perspective. Those who enroll are assisted in becoming more skilled in developing teacher strategies and materials uniquely suited to the rural learner.

An Invitational Small Schools Conference (O'Fallon, 1974) was held in 1973 in Tennessee as a starting point in launching a small schools task force. The primary objectives of this task force were to identify needs and priorities of small schools in Tennessee, to develop leadership for the development of preservice and inservice programs for small school personnel, and to generate research related to the small school. These objectives were especially aimed at providing assistance to 96 small school districts in Tennessee. A task force position paper was developed as a result of topic presentations, discussions of problems, and review of an innovation model for change in small schools.

Eastern Kentucky University offers a rural education course for elementary teachers entitled "Teaching the Rural Disadvantaged Child." The course is offered regularly during the summer session at the University and when requested the course has been taught off campus. Enrollments range from 15 to 40 students, most of whom are graduate inservice teachers. The primary goal of the course is to attempt to change the negative stereotyping that teachers may possess of low-income, low-achieving rural children. The secondary goal is to assist the teachers in preparing lesson materials that focus on life experiences as a base for learning.

Northern Montana College offers a summer session "Automated Teaching Systems" course for inservice teachers. This course, part of a three-year project for teachers in eight rural school districts, is designed to assist these districts in providing alternative vocational and remedial learning experiences for special needs students. The direction of the program is to enable the special needs students to become more employable and capable of being successful in more advanced technical training. The College is responsible for coordinating the sharing of programs between schools, the training of student teachers in the utilization of the automated teaching systems, and the inservice on-the-job training of the teachers in the eight schools by the trained student teachers. The College also provides career counseling assistance through the utilization of interns enrolled in the Master's degree program in Career Guidance.

The University of Montana through the Division of Educational Research and Services provides service and research to Montana school districts through inservice training to develop better teaching and learning patterns, faculty planning, curriculum studies and evaluation, school board policy formulation, physical facility and educational program evaluation, consultation, and advisement. In addition, the School of Education provides an opportunity for graduate students working in administration and curriculum to further their training through field-based work with Montana communities, school boards, administrators, teachers, and students.

Brigham Young University has initiated a new design for teacher education (Allred and Muse, 1976: p. 4) involving a cooperative venture

in preservice/inservice education. The venture involves removing the regular teachers and administrators in a selected rural school and replacing them for a period of time (three to five school days) by student trainees. The student teachers attend several training sessions in a day spent on the public school campus with the cooperating teacher and the classes that they will be assuming when the regular teacher leaves.

During the time the regular teachers are gone, they participate in a workshop planned by them and conducted by the University. During the past three years, eight school districts have participated in the cooperative teacher exchange arrangement. At no time during the "take-over" of the schools have there been any serious school problems arising. Parents have been laudatory of the program, and no criticisms have been reported to the school officials from community patrons. The student teachers have been very enthusiastic and have praised the rural schools where they have worked. Many of these students have changed their attitudes about teaching in a rural community as a result of this project.

The New York Center for Migrant Studies at State University College in Geneseo in New York offers a first-year graduate level course in individualizing instruction for rural teachers. This course, while not specifically limited to inservice of rural teachers, does deal with problems of migrant children, culturally disadvantaged, and rural schools.

A NEW DESIGN FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

A primary intent of this publication, in addition to bringing attention to several promising and productive rural training programs, is to identify and enunciate some desired features of a teacher education program that would improve the quality of rural education. There is evidence, if somewhat miniscule, that a few teacher-training institutions are attempting to establish new models of training that include a rural education dimension. These thrusts, however, are hardly signs of a massive leap to instructional change and differing organizational arrangements. To some, the frightening idea continues to lurk that the educational enterprise may be too huge and complex to allow any real or rational change that would be beneficial to rural education systems.

One would be remiss, though, to be totally pessimistic about the ability and desire of teacher-training institutions to change. Several promising signs are occurring within teacher education which connote movement in a direction of progress. Progress in this context refers to program changes that possess potential for serving the needs of rural as well as urban schools.

For example, professional education courses have been accused continuously over the years of being of ridiculously low quality. Veteran teachers refer frequently to the failure of their college professors to make instruction relevant and meaningful. An exciting new idea in teacher education that is potentially capable of overcoming the dissatisfaction is called competency or performance-based education. Performance-based education, rapidly gaining momentum among colleges of education, is pointed toward improved quality of teacher education on

the basis of student-demonstrated performance. Identifying necessary competencies for students to attain mastery of, rather than the completion of prescribed courses, provides an opportunity for student self-selection of objectives and some specialization. Often a number of the competencies relate in a very meaningful manner to the skills that are necessary for teaching in a rural area. The added thrust of performance-based teacher education to test competencies through the use of practical situations further encourages a field-based approach which may result in more students receiving teaching experience in rural areas.

Organization for Rural Education

Performance-based teacher education provides a responsible base to the need for specialization in teacher training. However, if teacher education is to be truly responsive to the needs of our educational system, one thing is certain, that is, that teacher education must be prepared to embark in many new directions. The recommendations that follow call for teacher-training institutions to recognize the needs of rural schools and to adopt new strategies for the preparation and inservice training of teachers for rural areas.

1. Specialization of faculty. Typically, professors of education tend to be faculty members who perform as "generalists" rather than specialists. In the past, practitioners in the field tended to expect professors of education to be able to work with a total situation rather than just a particular area. Graduate schools of education have also encouraged the general practitioner approach by providing required programs that teach a broad school orientation.

"Generalist" is by no means a negative title. On the contrary, the generalist is in an advantageous position to understand the total environment of the school and has a better frame of reference in which to resolve problems. Even prospective teachers can be given only so much specialization, and then they must be equipped with an understanding of the total process of education.

A faculty of all generalists, however, is not what is needed in teacher education today. Specialists are advocates for their programs, and they are in a position to render invaluable aid to those individuals who work in their area of specialization. Only specialists can adequately teach reading, engage in curriculum development, initiate career education programs, teach in ghetto schools, work with learning disabilities, etc. Why not specialists for rural education? O'Hanlon (1976) emphatically states:

> The generalist position, however, is not what the college of education needs today to gain credibility, either with the rest of the university of which it is a part or with the practitioners in the field. Universities are organized on the basis of identified faculty specialties. . . . Often, professors of education complain that they do not have appropriate status within the university or that everybody thinks that anyone is an expert in education. Perhaps this is in part a result of their failure to recognize the need for functioning as specialists. (p. 133)

A specialist in rural education would be better able to gain the respect of practitioners in rural areas because he/she would be able to provide leadership in inservice education, curriculum development, etc., as well as assist in the training of those individuals who wish to work in rural schools. Interested professors must be given assignments which

allow for rural specialization and support services must be made available to assist them in being successful.

2. Cooperative relationships. The need for cooperation among educational agencies has never been greater. Schools are demanding better teachers, and students and teacher educators are expressing concern about the relevancy of courses and providing earlier laboratory experiences for students to prepare to teach. New cooperative relationships between schools and colleges are a "must" (Pomeroy, 1974: p. 5). In the same manner that urban centers were developed to train teachers for the inner city, field-based training centers in rural areas are needed to provide inservice and preservice teacher education oriented toward the special needs of rural youth (Pankratz, 1975: p. 108).

Training centers of necessity must be located in rural areas, not near the university or college campus. Teacher trainees cannot become familiar with the sociology of the rural community if each day after school they travel home to the sheltered environment of the training institution's campus.

Rather than cling tenaciously to the archaic concept that teacher education is the sole responsibility of the teacher-training institution, these schools must learn to utilize, in positive and productive ways, the public school systems, state educational agencies, regional education service centers, teacher groups, and all others in the larger community of which they are a part. Rural teacher training, to be effective, calls for new school roles and parity relationships through a consortium of concerned groups working together in a viable partnership. The concept of cooperation is not new, and the actual

operation has been proven effective. In West Virginia, teacher education centers (Maddox, 1972), utilizing the principle of shared sovereignty, have been organized to bring about needed change in teacher training and inservice education. The ambitious nature of the program is evident in the numerous statewide teacher education centers that have been established and the participation of each of the 17 teacher preparatory institutions in the state as a member of at least one of the centers.

Teacher Corps can be viewed as an explicit attempt by the federal government to establish and encourage collaboration for change in local institutions (Steffensen, 1975: p. 111). Collaboration has been a significant trademark of Teacher Corps support for teacher-training programs, preservice and inservice. Through Teacher Corps assistance, numerous schools, colleges, committees, and other groups have collectively supported programs in their areas that enhance teacher education.

3. Team governance. The skills needed by new teachers going into rural areas are primarily those of close interaction with students, parents, school administrators and teachers, and community people. The best way to learn is in real situations. The place to learn to be a teacher is in a school. The people who can tell the teacher trainee about the actualities of school are the experienced teachers, administrators, counselors, and students (Spillane and Levenson, 1976: p. 438).

Ideally, well-prepared and competent cooperating teachers should have responsibility equal to the college professor in training and evaluating the work of the student teacher. Public school

administrators in the field should teach about the relationships among school, community, teacher, and other members of the educational community. Articulate members of the community groups should also have the opportunity to input into the prospective teacher's training sequence. Who can better explore the socioeconomic and ethnic characteristics of a community, as well as the local traditions, customs, and values, than the parents who live in the area?

Obviously, this type of training arrangement will require considerable joint exploration, inquiry, and organization adjustments. The question of governance, team responsibility, reciprocity, and levels of program support need serious and constant study if the training model is to be effective and successful.

4. Preservice/inservice. Any model for teacher training in rural areas should also consider the need for practitioner renewal. Continuous inservice training is essential for all school staff members, and where possible this training should be brought to the public school campus. Brown (1975: p. 29) asserts that the current forms of inservice teacher education which utilize professors who have not taught in a public school for twenty years are not acceptable. These people are not aware of the day-to-day problems of teachers and generally have difficulty relating inservice work to classroom work. Rather than debate the merits of professional ability--which is futile--the idea of incompetence remains valid in many school pupils' minds. What is needed is a new concept of education personnel development. This concept sees training as taking place partly on campus and partly in the school districts. Teaching centers or cooperating units will serve as development

areas in which training, research, and discussions are held. Professors coming to these centers on a regular basis to assist the training of preservice teachers will be reeducated to the "real life" in the schools. They will receive as well as give new insights into educational problems. As interaction occurs, distinctions between the college faculty and the public school faculty will fade as training (preservice and inservice) and research efforts become the responsibility of all members of the education profession.

Obviously, before this design of cooperation can take place, teacher education institutions will be required to develop flexible organizational systems that permit an open two-way flow of educational personnel. Professors may need to spend considerable time off campus in supervising and consultant capacities. Practitioners will be required to assist in the training of student teachers and may even receive some teaching assignments on campus. Inservice training of staff will become a joint responsibility of both faculties (school and college) and the district administrative units.

Central to this entire concept is reorganization of the colleges so that preservice and inservice education as well as the schools and colleges themselves exist as one interrelated and goal-directed educational system. The goal is to prepare the kind of educational personnel who can challenge, inspire, and prepare the rural child to take his special place in society as a productive citizen.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ivan D. Muse is the Director of Rural Education at Brigham Young University, his alma mater, where he also serves as Professor of Secondary Education and Foundations. He received his Master's in Education from the University of Arizona in 1958 and his Doctorate in Education from the University of Utah in 1966.

Dr. Muse has served as high school teacher, vice-principal, and principal. He has directed the American Samoa Masters Degree Program. He has participated in a number of workshops throughout Utah and Micronesia and has served as a consultant to the Uintah Basin Development Council, Northwest Regional Laboratory in Portland, Oregon, and for various high schools within the school system of Hawaii.

He has authored numerous publications and papers dealing with preservice and inservice training of teachers, rural education, competency-based teacher evaluation, culturally different children, and positive experiences for student teachers.

Dr. Muse was the co-recipient of the First Annual Award for the Outstanding Research in Rural Education presented by the Rural/ Regional Education Association for his paper, "A Study of Rural Teachers and the Rural Schools as Perceived by School Administrators, Teachers, Parents, and Students."